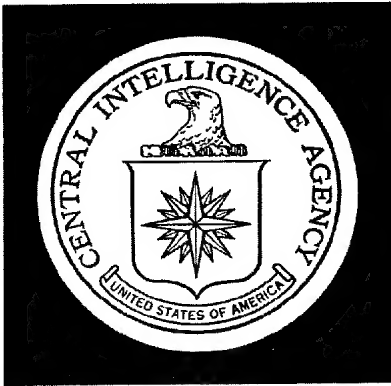


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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

MEMORANDUM

The Situation in Vietnam

Top Secret

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18 April 1967

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Information as of 1600
18 April 1967

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HIGHLIGHTS

Communist military pressure against the South Vietnamese Revolutionary Development continues in I Corps.

I. The Military Situation in South Vietnam:
Communist units engaged three RD teams in Thua Thien Province on 17 April in an apparently continuing effort to eliminate the RD program in I Corps (Paras. 1-4). Communist military units may rotate from Quang Tri Province back into North Vietnam and be replaced with other NVA units (Paras. 5-7).

II. Political Developments in South Vietnam:
The GVN plans to inaugurate the "national reconciliation" program on 19 April (Para. 1).

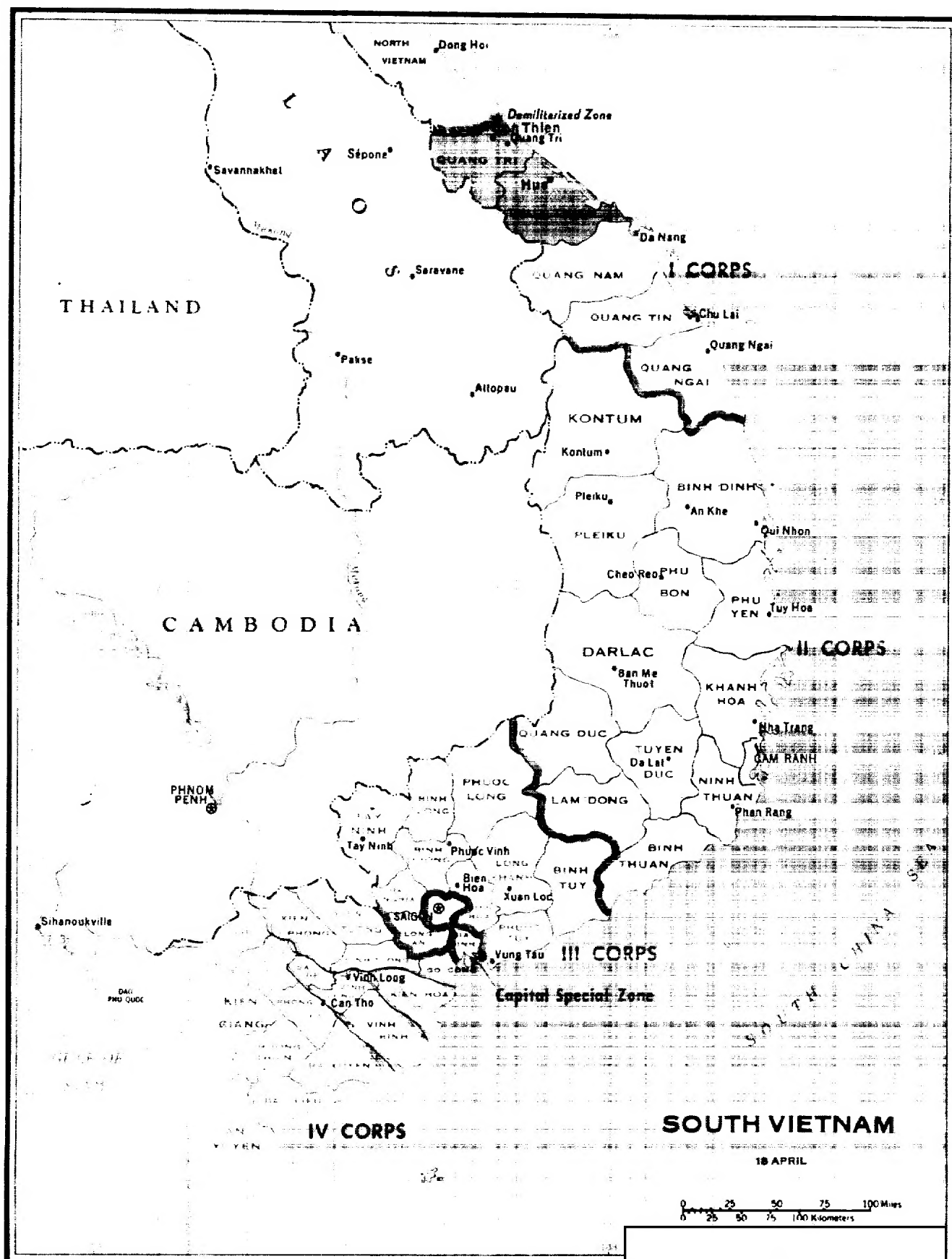
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IV. Other Communist Military Developments: There is nothing of significance to report.

V. Communist Political Developments: There is nothing of significance to report.

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I. THE MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. Communist military pressure against South Vietnam's Revolutionary Development (RD) program remains heavy in I Corps.

2. In the northern province of Thua Thien, three RD teams and a Province Reconnaissance Unit were engaged on 17 April by an enemy force of undetermined size in an area about four miles east of Hue. The encounter lasted for more than seven hours and resulted in friendly losses of 16 killed and 19 wounded; Communist losses are unknown. A South Vietnamese reaction force of an ARVN battalion supported by artillery and armored vehicles engaged the enemy force and, in a 10-hour battle, killed 71, while suffering 13 killed and 47 wounded.

3. This incident was another of more than 200 enemy incidents against RD teams throughout South Vietnam this year. Of these incidents, approximately 50 percent have occurred in I Corps. The high incident rate not only reflects an improved North Vietnamese Army (NVA) military posture in I Corps, but also suggests a Communist effort to eliminate the RD program while it is still in its infancy and before the government can challenge Communist control in the I Corps countryside.

4. There are indications that the stepped-up tempo of Communist military activities in I Corps has had detrimental effects on RD in at least Quang Tri and Thua Thien provinces. The casualties inflicted on the teams as well as on the forces screening their activities appear to have lowered their morale and increased desertion and absenteeism.

Rotation of NVA Units in the Quang Tri Area

5. Some North Vietnamese Army units presently deployed in the DMZ - Quang Tri Province area may be relieved and rotated back to the North, according to a NVA private who rallied on 1 April near Con Thien.

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6. The rallier, who has provided other information which has been verified, stated that the 90th Regiment would relieve the 812th Regiment, with the latter returning to North Vietnam for recuperation. He mentioned that the 31st Regiment would also rotate back, presumably to exchange places with another unit.

7. Communist units in the Quang Tri Province area have been known to pull back into the sanctuary of the DMZ and of North Vietnam itself following heavy and costly encounters with allied troops in order to regroup and rebuild before reinfiltrating. This report suggests that replacement of battle-weary units in regimental size may be contemplated by the enemy.

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II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. After several postponements, the GVN is now scheduled to begin its program for the "national reconciliation" of individual Vietnamese Communists on 19 April. Plans to proclaim the program on 1 April as part of the ceremony in which the constitution was promulgated were canceled at the last minute to allow further revisions. The proposal text for the present release has been amplified considerably. The Chieu Hoi defector program is strongly re-emphasized and constitutional guarantees to defectors are spelled out in some detail. Returnees will be "protected by the government" and will be "warmly welcomed as citizens" with full privileges. As citizens, they "can be employed by the government in accordance with their ability." Moreover, their crimes committed under Communist pressure will not disqualify them for citizenship; they will be able to "sweep their mistakes into the past."

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IV. OTHER COMMUNIST MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

1. There is nothing of significance to report.

V. COMMUNIST POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

1. There is nothing of significance to report.

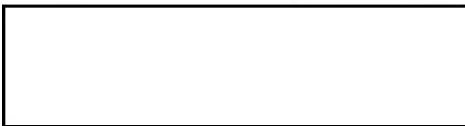
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